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Massachusetts Officials Announce New **“Massachusetts Outdoor Recreation Map”** *Published just in time for summer vacation planning*

CONCORD – On the shores of Walden Pond, Massachusetts environmental officials today displayed a new “Massachusetts Outdoor Recreation Map” packed with information for residents and visitors looking for places to enjoy outdoor activities such as fishing, boating, hunting, camping, hiking, wildlife watching, and swimming across the Bay State.

“Whether you appreciate active recreation like kayaking in rapids of one of the state’s rivers or more sedate activities like strolling down a beautiful beach, Massachusetts has much to offer to anyone who loves the great outdoors,” Governor Patrick writes in a message to map users. “This outdoor recreation map is a fantastic resource for you to get to know all of our natural assets.”

“Summer is here. It’s time to get out and enjoy the 620,000 acres of open space managed by the Massachusetts Departments of Fish and Game and Conservation and Recreation,” said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Ian Bowles, whose office oversees both departments. “At a time when many people are concerned about travel and fuel expenses, I encourage folks to see what Massachusetts has to offer for summer vacation options and outdoor activities throughout the year.”

The new Massachusetts Outdoor Recreation Map, updated for the first time since 2005, shows conservation land managed by the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) and the Department of Fish and Game’s (DFG) Division of Fisheries and Wildlife. It also identifies all boat access, sport fishing piers, and shore fishing areas managed by DFG’s Office of Fishing and Boating Access, and lists hundreds of state properties and facilities and the types of recreational opportunities they offer. There is additional information about outdoor safety, outdoor ethics, licensing requirements for fishing and hunting, and web links to further information regarding

recreational opportunities on state properties. It is a great resource for tourists and Massachusetts residents alike.

“This outdoor recreation guide is particularly useful to Massachusetts residents and visitors who enjoy active outdoor recreation and nature,” said Mary Griffin, DFG Commissioner.

“Massachusetts has an incredible diversity of parks, forests, reservations, and wildlife management areas that offer all kinds of recreational opportunities for adults and children.”

DFG oversees 160,000 acres of wildlife lands across the Commonwealth, while DCR manages 450,000 acres of park and watershed lands statewide, including 67 beaches, 39 pools, 60 playgrounds, 200 miles of trails, 28 campgrounds with 3,525 campsites, and 16 harbor islands.

“Massachusetts has one of the largest state park systems in the nation, which is quite remarkable given that we’re one of the smallest states,” said DCR Commissioner Richard K. Sullivan Jr.

“We have miles of beaches, hiking and walking trails, and cycling paths, as well as campgrounds and picnic areas, and I urge everyone to join us in the great outdoors.”

For a number of years, DFG, DCR and Department of Agricultural Resources staff have worked together to promote outdoor experiences and opportunities by developing a joint agency exhibit displayed at travel and tourism conferences and green tourism workshops, and used at speaking engagements at regional tourism meetings. Publication of this map is the latest example of environmental agencies collaborating on a common goal of promoting outdoor recreation, welcoming tourism and helping to boost the state’s economy.

According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s (USFWS) 2006 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation, recreational anglers in Massachusetts (both residents and non-residents) spent more than \$769 million in 2006, while hunters spent more than \$70 million and people who enjoy wildlife watching spent about \$755 million. The USFWS estimates that 1.9 million people participated in wildlife watching in Massachusetts in 2006, about 500,000 people enjoyed fishing, and 73,000 hunted. According to the DCR, more than 14 million people visit Massachusetts state forests and parks annually. The DCR reports that reservations at state campgrounds are up nearly 14 percent from last year.

The Massachusetts Outdoor Recreation Map will be available at the DFG and Office of Fishing and Boating offices in Boston, all Division of Fisheries and Wildlife offices and hatcheries, DCR properties across the state, and highway information centers. The map is also available online at http://www.mass.gov/dfwele/dfw/recreation/publications/recreation_map.pdf

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